

# MONTANA SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

## Accreditation Standards Summary of Major Changes

Over the past several years, the Board of Public Education directed the process to review and revise the 1989 Montana School Accreditation Standards. Montana educators and the public were engaged in this process at varying levels and degrees, from revising and editing the standards to commenting at public hearings. For a complete copy of the Montana School Accreditation Standards and Procedures Manual, go to the Office of Public Instruction web site at [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us) and click on the Accreditation Division, under Programs and Services of OPI.

The chart below summarizes the major changes made to the Montana School Accreditation Standards for Chapter 54, Content and Performance Standards, and Chapter 55, which includes these sections - General Provisions, School Leadership, Educational Opportunity, Academic Requirements, and School Facilities and Student Records. The first column lists the titles and numbers of the standards rules and the second column clarifies the changes made to each standard.

| <b>MONTANA SCHOOL<br/>ACCREDITATION<br/>STANDARDS - 2001</b> | <b>CLARIFICATION</b>  |
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| <b>CHAPTER 54 - Content and Performance Standards</b>        | Using an ongoing process, districts will align local curricula to state content and performance standards by July 1, 2004 (see 10.55.601(7)). Over the past several years, Montana educators and the public have been engaged in a process to revise the K-12 content and performance standards. The content and performance standards describe what all students are expected to know, understand, and be able to do by the time they graduate from Montana's K-12 education system. |
| <b>10.54.2503<br/>Standards Review Schedule</b>              | July 1, 2005 is the start date for the implementation of the state standards review schedule. The Board of Public Education (BPE) will establish a common, systematic state standards review schedule.  |
| <b>CHAPTER 55 - Changes in Accreditation Standards</b>       | In November 2000, the BPE adopted changes to the Montana School Accreditation Standards in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Provisions</li> <li>• School Leadership</li> <li>• Educational Opportunity</li> <li>• Academic Requirements</li> <li>• School Facilities and Records</li> </ul>  |
| <b>10.55.601(3) Accreditation Procedures District</b>        | 10.55.601(3) The five-year comprehensive education plan for school district improvement is part of the accreditation procedures. This plan includes several components: education profile, education goals, standards, and curricula alignment plan, assessment plan, and professional development plan. The district five-year May 1, 2003 (Proposed Change).  |
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| <b>10.55.601(4) Notice of Deferrals - ELIMINATED</b>       | The <b>old</b> accreditation rule 10.55.601(4) <b>Notice of Deferrals</b> was repealed and is no longer an option for schools.  |
| <b>10.55.603 Curriculum and Assessment</b>                 | <p>This rule requires that school districts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assess the progress of all students toward achieving content and performance standards in all program areas - 603(1)</li> <li>• review curricula at intervals not exceeding five years and modify as needed to meet educational goals of the five-year comprehensive education plan - 603(2)(b) (see 10.55.601(3))</li> <li>• use effective and appropriate multiple measures and methods to assess student progress in achieving all content and performance standards in all program areas - 603(3)(a)</li> <li>• develop a student assessment process for each program area in the school year following the completion of that curriculum - 603(3)(d)</li> <li>• report annually to the OPI the school level results of measures for the standards that are not assessed by the NRT in reading and math at grades 4, 8, and 11- 603(4)</li> <li>• include this information in the district assessment plan 603(4)(a) (see 10.55.601 (3))</li> </ul> |
| <b>10.55.603 Curriculum and Assessment (continued)</b>     | 10.55.603(2)(d) requires that tribal representatives, when appropriate, be involved in local curriculum development and review of curricula to ensure inclusion of unique and distinct cultural heritage of American Indians.   |
| <b>10.55.604 Variances to Standards (1) Alternative</b>    | <p>This rule has been revised. There are two types of variances for which schools may apply: <b>alternative to a standard or section of standards and charter school</b>.</p> <p>For the <b>alternative</b>, an initial application, if approved by the BPE, can be approved for a two-year term. Upon renewal, the BPE may approve the alternative application for a five-year term. An on-site visitation by OPI personnel must be completed prior to a renewal recommendation.</p> <p>The alternative application process excludes standards stating statutory criteria, standards pertaining to teacher certification, and content and performance standards.</p>   |
| <b>10.55.604 Variances to Standards (2) Charter School</b> | Section (2) Charter School is <b>new</b> . <b>Charter schools</b> may be granted by the BPE only to publicly funded schools under the supervision and control of a locally elected board of trustees in an existing school district. Application must be made to the BPE through the Office of Public Instruction.  |
|  | This rule requires that schools seeking initial or reinstatement of   |

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| <b>10.55.605 Categories of Accreditation</b>                                   | accreditation must meet the requirements of regular accreditation and be reviewed on-site by the Office of Public Instruction 10.55.605(6).   |
| <b>10.55.606 Performance-Based Accreditation</b>                               | Previously defined in rule 10.55.604(5), Performance-Based Accreditation now stands alone as a new rule (10.55.606). Applications of intent to participate in this six-step school improvement process may be made to the OPI by a district on behalf of one or more of its schools. The BPE makes the final accreditation decision based on the individual school evidence of attainment or progress toward meeting school improvement plan goals. |
| <b>10.55.701 Board of Trustees</b>   | This rule requires a written policy on parent involvement 701(3)(m) and requires that Montana's education institutions enact policies to learn about the distinct and unique heritage of American Indians in a culturally responsive manner 10.55.603(2)(d), 701(3)(n), 803(2)(c) and (h).  |
| <b>10.55.703 Certification and Duties of School Administrators - Principal</b> | A principal is appropriately assigned if that individual is enrolled in a BPE approved principal <b>internship</b> program 10.55.703(1)(b).   |
| <b>10.55.704(2) Assignment of Curriculum Directors</b>                         | Districts with <b>less than 100 FTE</b> certified staff and no full-time curriculum coordinator <b>shall</b> employ the services of a regional curriculum coordinator.  |
| <b>10.55.707 Teacher and Specialist Certification</b>                          | A teacher (special education) or guidance counselor is appropriately assigned if that individual is enrolled in a BPE approved <b>internship</b> program 10.55.707(4).  |
| <b>10.55.714 Professional Development</b>                                      | This rule defines professional development and clarifies the requirements of a district professional development plan. The professional development plan is a required component of the district's five-year comprehensive education plan due to the OPI on May 1, 2003 (Proposed Change). An amendment to that five-year professional development plan is required annually.   |
| <b>10.55.715 Instructional Aides</b>   | Previously listed under rule 10.55.707.   |
| <b>10.55.801 School Climate<br/>(2) Areas of technology<br/>ELIMINATED</b>     | Section (2), <b>areas of technology</b> , of this rule was eliminated because the language was outdated.  |
| <b>10.55.803 Learner Access</b>  | This rule requires the board of trustees to consider the unique needs of American Indian students and to provide books and materials reflecting authentic historical and contemporary portrayals of American Indians to all students.   |
| <b>10.55.804 Gifted and Talented</b>   | This rule clarifies the requirements to guide schools in serving all gifted   |

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|   | and talented students. The rule includes providing educational services commensurate to student needs, complying with all state and federal laws, providing structured support and assistance to teachers in identifying and meeting diverse student needs, and developing a framework for considering a full range of alternatives for addressing student needs. (See Montana School Accreditation Standards Appendix G-Recommended Program Guidelines) |
| <b>10.55.902 Middle Grades</b>  | This rule was revised to reflect the requirements and differences between middle school and grades 7 and 8 funded programs. The amended rule incorporates revision of 10.55.902 and 10.55.903. Clarification was made in outlining program areas that must be required of all students yearly and what programs must be maintained in “balance” or what students must be allowed to elect on a yearly basis.   |
| <b>10.55.903 Basic Education<br/>Program: Junior High and<br/>Grades 7 and 8 Budgeted at High<br/>School Rates<br/>REPEALED</b> | This rule 10.55.903 is repealed and incorporated into 10.55.902 Middle Grades.   |
| <b>10.55.907 Distance Learning</b>  | This rule was revised to include more flexibility for districts to utilize distance learning. Specific direction is provided on the use and type of distance learning needed.  |
| <b>10.55.908 School Facilities<br/>RENUMBERED</b>   | Previously listed under 10.55.2001   |
| <b>10.55.909 Student Records<br/>RENUMBERED</b>   | Previously listed under 10.55.2002<br>The rule eliminated the requirement to keep student records in a fire resistant file or vault; addition of a requirement that schools keep permanent files in secure storage 10.55.2002(1) and (2).  |
| <b>10.55.1002 Cross-Content and<br/>Thinking Skills<br/>ELIMINATED</b>  | The rule 10.55.1002 was repealed and the concepts incorporated into rule 10.55.1003 Program Foundation Standards.  |
| <b>10.55.1003 – Program<br/>Foundation Standards</b>  | The rule 10.55.1003 Program Foundation Standards is a new rule that incorporates and extends the concepts from a repealed rule 10.55.1002 Cross-Content and Thinking Skills. The Program Foundation Standards describe common conditions, practices, and resources that all districts will work to provide, ensuring the implementation of the content and performance standards.  |
| <b>10.55.1004 – 10.55.2101 Program</b>  | The Program Delivery Standards are revisions of the program area   |

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| <b>Delivery Standards</b>   | standards from the 1989 Montana School Accreditation Standards. The Program Delivery Standards are content specific conditions and practices necessary for all students to meet or exceed the content and performance standards.   |
| <b>10.55.1701 Career and<br/>Vocational Technical Education<br/>Program Delivery Standard</b><br><br><b>Vocational/Practical Arts<br/>RENAMED</b> | Career and Vocational Technical Education was formerly titled Vocational/Practical Arts. This name change more clearly defines vocational education today. The disciplines within CVTE include: Business and Marketing Education, Industrial Technology Education, Agricultural Education, Family Consumer Sciences Education, and Occupational Health Education.  |
| <b>Traffic Education</b>  | Traffic education (Driver's Education) is <b>not</b> included as one of the disciplines within Career and Vocational Technical Education. Students may continue to use a traffic education course as an elective toward meeting graduation credit requirements. However, a course in traffic education may not be used to meet the one unit requirement at the high school level for career and vocational technical education. Schools are expected to implement this change by the 2002-2003 academic school year. |